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Seeing and Unseeing Prevent's racialised borders with China Miéville's '*The City and the City*'.

Abstract

This article provides a re-theorisation of the Prevent strategy as racialised bordering. It explores how knowledge regarding the racist logics of British counter-terrorism are suppressed through structures of white ignorance and how IR scholarship is implicated in this tendency to 'whitewash' Prevent's racism. Building on the use of science fiction (SF) in IR, the article uses China Miéville's novel *The City and the City* to undertake the analysis. Miéville evokes a world where the cities of Ul Qoma and Beszel occupy the same physical space but are distinct sovereign jurisdictions. Citizens are disciplined to 'see' their city and 'unsee' the other city to produce borders between the two. The themes of coding signifiers of difference and seeing/unseeing as bordering practices are used to explore how Prevent racialises Muslims as outsiders to a white Britain in need of defending. Muslim difference is hypervisibilised or seen as potentially threatening and coded as part of a racialised symptoms which constitute radicalisation and extremism. This article shows how the racial bordering of Prevent sustains violence perpetrated by white supremacists which is subsequently 'unseen' through the case of Thomas Mair.

Key words: Prevent strategy, racial borders, whiteness, CRT, right-wing extremism.

Introduction

In June 2016, Darren Osbourne drove his van into Muslim worshippers outside Finsbury Park mosque in London, killing Makram Ali and injuring nine others. He was described as a 'terrorist' by the police and government (Rawlinson, 2018). The sentencing judge argued Osbourne had been "rapidly radicalised over the internet, encountering and consuming material put out [...] from those determined to spread hatred of Muslims on the basis of their religion" (Ibid). Osbourne was prosecuted for terrorism-related murder under section 30 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2008. The case appears to reflect comments made by Lord Carlile of Berriew of the Prevent strategy review. He writes, "This new strategy is designed to endure. Already it has to deal with a range of terrorism threats, including Al Qa'ida and right-wing extremism" (HM Government, 2011: 3).

Reflecting on the case of Osbourne, Prevent is constituted as a programme that intervenes in the lives of subjects 'vulnerable' to radicalisation before criminal or terrorist offences have been committed. In 2017-18, 18% of referrals to the Prevent programme were related to 'right-wing extremism' while 44% were 'Islamist extremists' (Home Office, 2018: 4). 32% of referrals for the deradicalisation programme Channel were composed of 'right-wing' individuals, while 50% were 'Islamist extremists' (Ibid). Differences in referral numbers are explained by the perceived scale and organisation of threat posed by Islamists as compared to right-wing extremists (HM Government, 2011: 15). Claims of treating right-wing extremists and 'Islamists' as equivalent are, however, impossible. Instead, this article argues that Prevent operates through racialised understandings of radicalisation and extremism that 'border' (van Houtum, Kramsch and Zierhofen, 2005) Muslim populations as a collective threat to white Britain while individualising the violence of white supremacists as the work of 'lone wolves'. Prevent relies on the unseeing of racialised bordering to legitimate its own existence as a benign safeguarding structure designed to target more than 'just' Islamist radicals.

Prevent has been analysed through the intersecting theoretical lenses of risk management, pre-emptive government, and the suspect communities thesis (Mythen, Walklate and Khan, 2009; Pantazis and Pemberton 2009). IR scholarship on Prevent has paid mixed attention to questions of 'race' and racialisation, frequently engaging in whitewashing (Howell and Richter-Montpetit, 2019). While some contributions have tentatively explored the links between counter-radicalisation practices and racialised Muslim populations (Martin, 2018; Ragazzi, 2017; 2015), in other work these concerns are under-theorised leaving them either implicit (Heath-Kelly, 2013) or marginal and/or, absent (Heath-Kelly and Strausz, 2018; Heath-Kelly, 2016; Heath-Kelly 2012; Martin 2014a; 2014b). Instead, this article engages with scholarship which centres processes of racialisation (Kapoor, 2018; Qurashi, 2018; Patel, 2017; Sian, 2017; Cohen and Tufail, 2017; Sabir 2017; Kundnani, 2014). However, what is yet to be addressed in these accounts is how constructions of Britishness are also racialised. The bordering of Muslim populations relies on the relational but unspoken constitution of Britain as a white nation which needs to be defended and the unseeing of this

process. Prevent functions to remove the actions of white supremacists from the context of the Britain they are seeking to defend thereby concealing a key site through which whiteness is reproduced. Therefore, the first contribution the article makes is theorising Prevent as racial bordering shows it is an inadequate policy response to right-wing extremism because it represents the continuation of white violence.

Nevertheless, the argument that Prevent is inherently racialised is contested by politicians and practitioners (Hawkes and Pollard, 2017). The article shows how the unseeing of the racism of Prevent is predicated on structures of white ignorance linked to colonial amnesia (Mills, 2007; Applebaum, 2010). Colonial amnesia enables the construction of Britain as a white nation, consolidating the marginalisation of postcolonial others as 'immigrants, foreigners, and outsiders' (Tyler, 2012: 12). White ignorance works to reproduce this amnesia, turning 'race' into an attribute of the 'other' to be bordered and policed, leaving whiteness as unseen and unspoken within security discourses. The second contribution the article makes it to show how Prevent both relies on structures of white ignorance to make secret its racial logics and reproduces these through racialised bordering.

To analyse Prevent's constitution of racialised borders through seeing and unseeing the article turns to China Miéville's novel *The City and the City* (TCATC). The article builds on Kiersey and Neumann's view that SF can disrupt the aspects of the social world which are taken for granted (2016). Within the world of TCATC, two cities, Ul Qoma and Beszel, occupy the same physical space but exist not only independently of one another, but such that the 'other' city is unseen. Citizens are trained as children to experience their own city – its sites, smells, and sounds – and 'unsee' the city which is other until they cross an official border; one that is policed by a sovereign force called Breach. Drawing on TCATC and insights from the literature on borders, white ignorance, and Critical Race Theory (CRT), the themes of coding signifiers of difference and seeing/unseeing, are used to recover the racial borders of Prevent. While in TCATC the self is visibilised and the other is unseen, Prevent operates in reverse to hypervisibilise the threatening difference of Muslim others and the unseeing of white supremacist terrorism as structural violence tied to defences of white Britain.

The article is organised into three sections. The first examines literature which whitewashes the racial logics of Prevent. This section moves on to look at literature that locates Prevent within the intersection of racialisation, counter-terrorism, and the war on terror, understood as a global racist project (Razack, 2008). The second section turns to TCATC and its themes of the codification of difference and seeing/unseeing, as well as the literature on borders, white ignorance, and CRT, to read the racial borders of Prevent. The third section uses these themes to analyse how structures of seeing/unseeing hypervisibilise Muslim populations and conceal structural white violence through safeguarding discourses. Ultimately the article seeks to show how racialised security policy contributes to the reproduction of whiteness.

Reading Prevent: whitewashing in IR scholarship and the war on terror as a global racial formation.

IR scholarship on Prevent draws on intersecting frameworks of risk management, pre-emptive government, and paradigms of suspicion (Ragazzi, 2017, 2015; Heath-Kelly, 2016; 2013; 2012; Martin, 2018; 2014a, 2014b). 'Race' and racialisation have occupied an ambivalent place in these analyses, enabling the whitewashing of Prevent. This reflects a wider disciplinary tendency to write out the centrality of 'race' from the genesis, practice and theorisation of IR (Vitalis, 2015; Hobson, 2012). Anievas, Manchanda and Shilliam note, 'questions of race and racism have been pushed to the margins of contemporary IR' (2015: 2). More pertinent for this analysis, are the insights produced through Foucauldian Security Studies (FSS), which have provided the dominant 'critical' perspectives through which the global war on terror has been examined. Howell and Richter-Montpetit argue FSS fails to adequately theorise 'race and coloniality' leading to the whitewashing of how the politics of security is read (2018). The tendency toward what Bhabra (2017) calls 'methodological whiteness', amounts to either the expulsion of racism from analyses of Prevent, or a failure to engage with the racial context of how Muslims are construed as 'risky'.

Two examples of this tendency include Heath-Kelly (2012) and Martin (2014a), who draw on the literature on risk and the war on terror to explore the governing functions of Prevent. Despite their distinctive understanding of the role of risk, both converge on the understanding Prevent is an attempt to mitigate the threat of terrorism through the production of knowledge about future threats. They regard Prevent as generative of pre-emptive interventions in the present to manage unknowable futures. There is a shared understanding Muslim populations are subjects of suspicion, threatening to a normalised British identity and to be rendered governable through Prevent. However, these accounts do not engage with 'race' and racialisation in the constitution, implementation, and effects of security practices. Counter-intuitively, this is evident in the recognition that 'Muslims' are the target population of counter-terrorism practices, but this framing only implies but does not explicitly interrogate othering as a racialised process with a postcolonial history (Heath-Kelly, 2013).

Key racial occlusions are further reflected in Martin's (2018) analysis of regimes of (in)visibility. This is despite a discussion of how such processes operate to ensure "Muslimified subjects" are most likely to be visibilised as potential terrorists' through the Channel programme. Analysis of the panopticon does not acknowledge how this penal technology was 'colonising in method' (Mitchell, 1988: x), honed in colonial contexts (Kaplan, 1995) and continues to be indispensable to contemporary settler colonial states (Lentin, 2007). Feminist Surveillance Studies have shown racial politics is constitutive of panoptical technologies and not one of the possible 'lenses' through which populations are made into subjects (Smith, 2015). The failure to acknowledge 'race' as constitutive of security practices is manifest in how racism is consigned to being one of the many possible side-effects of Prevent as opposed to being its condition of possibility. Thus, processes of racialisation can be read into analyses of

Prevent (Martin, 2018) just as easily as they can be erased from them (Heath-Kelly, 2016). However, for many scholars, 'race' has been at the core of the war on terror, its practices and representations of Muslim populations across different contexts.

Omi and Winant argue 'race' is 'a way of "making up people"' (2015: 105). They show how processes of race-making have been central to the production of 'regimes of domination, inequality, and difference' in the US (2015: 106). Racialisation operates to 'order bodies' and 'attribute differential value' to them (Bhattacharyya, 2015: 112). Being racialised is tied to being visibilised, as a racial subject who embodies particular characteristics. 'Races' do not have any substantive content and in this sense race-making is fictive because it does not have a basis in physical or cultural realities. Regimes of racialisation and hierarchies of racialised subjects shift over time and across contexts (Shilliam, 2018; Virdee, 2014). Processes of racialisation have historically been connected to and have facilitated projects of European colonialism, the Atlantic slave trade, indigenous genocide, extractivism, and settler-colonialism.

Cainkar and Selod situate the war on terror as a white project in a longer history of 'global white supremacy' (2018: 167). Thobani (2007) similarly describes the war on terror as a 'white war' waged on the civilisational premise of bringing to heel savage Muslims who 'hate our freedoms'. Prevent must be considered as part of this literature which examines the links between 'race', borders, counter-terrorism practices and their circulation from the 'international' to the 'domestic' (Sabir, 2017). Razack (2008) describes the war on terror as the 'casting out' of Muslims from Western law and politics. She claims 'race thinking' denies 'a common bond between people of European descent and those who are not' and a 'colour-lined' world which determines those worthy of rights and those not, are the characteristics which mark the war on terror as a global racial formation (Razack: 2008: 6). Kapoor also shows how, in the UK, bordering practices of deportation, extradition, and citizenship deprivation, as expressions of state racism, are made possible by the 'less-than-citizen' positioning of Muslims in Western states (2018).

Prevent is located in a global configuration of raced discourses and practices which border Muslim populations across different contexts. Kundnani emulates this perspective through his examination of racialised surveillance infrastructures in the UK and US, instituted through the domestic war on terror. These findings are taken up in the work of Qurashi (2018) who explores how the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (2015) made radicalisation prevention a legal duty in the public sector. The Prevent Duty has extended the sites across which surveillance of Muslim populations is now possible. Kundnani also argues radicalisation models which proliferated after 9/11 were fundamentally racialised insofar as they conceptualise terrorism as a product of 'Muslim culture' rather than being part of larger historically situated political antagonism (2014: 10). Sian shows how ideas of radicalisation underpinning Prevent are expressions of colonial style race-science which, under the cover of positivist criminology, seek to produce and action 'scientific' frameworks of who is a potential terrorist (2017). She argues "In the same way that Lombroso employed the 'scientific

method' to develop typologies to draw conclusions around criminality, the Prevent programme has similarly attempted to use a scientifically based framework to draw evaluations around extremism." (2017: 2).

Yet, in spite of the extensive contributions outlined here, the literature on Prevent does not adequately engage with how the racialisation of Muslim subjects through surveillance techniques exists in relation to the reproduction of whiteness in Britain. Cainker and Selod are clear that the 'war on terror's racial project intersects with the historic U.S racial project of white supremacy' (2018: 165). The literature on Prevent does not systematically engage with either British colonial history or whiteness as crucial context for understanding the provenance and significance of Prevent. Nadine El-Enany's assertion that Britain is best understood as a racialised imperial formation centred on whiteness, is essential in unearthing Prevent's racist logics (2019). This means looking at how the racialisation of Muslim populations as threatening is constitutive of a white Britain in need of defending and the unseeing of this process. The article turns to TCATC, and its exploration of the coding of difference and seeing/unseeing, in order to analyse Prevent as racialised bordering.

TCATC: codifying difference, seeing/unseeing, and visibilising whiteness.

The turn to popular culture in IR has entailed an increasing engagement with SF for researching and teaching global politics (Caso and Hamilton, 2016). A thoroughgoing analysis of SF and IR, is outside the scope of this article (see Kirby, 2017) but this article offers a distinctive way of utilising SF. Namely, this is to use TCATC to recover the racial borders of Prevent which are obscured from view. This approach contrasts the predominant tendency in SF/IR scholarship which deploys SF as forms of analogy and descriptive analogy to 'recruit the speculative and the fantastical to make sense of world politics not because those narratives trouble or undermine or reimagine it, but because they replicate it in a way that is taken to be more easily digestible' (Kirby, 2017: 582). TCATC is not used as a mirror for the 'real' world in which cities of UI Qoma and Beszel and substituted for populations and political orders in the here-and-now of global politics. Rather, the techniques of codifying signifiers of difference and seeing/unseeing in the production of borders are theorised as political practices which, in conjunction with literature on borders, white ignorance, and CRT, can be used to recover the raced borders of Prevent.

Coding signifiers of difference and the construction of 'place'.

When a PhD student from the US named Mahalia Geary is murdered, her body is found in Beszel, though it later transpires she was killed in UI Qoma. The investigation is led by Beszel detective Tyador Borlú, who, early in the novel, receives a phone call from an informant in UI Qoma claiming to have information about Geary after seeing posters of her in Beszel. Borlú notes, "My informant should not have seen the posters. They were not in his country. He should never have told me. He made me an accessory. This information was allergen in Beszel – the mere fact of it in my head was a kind of trauma." (2009: 43). Borlú, like all citizens of UI Qoma and Beszel, has been taught as a child to see his city and unsee the 'other' city, the cardinal rule which

the informant is breaking. In sharing this information, the informant not only implicates the detective in the crime of breaching borders, but, in so doing he creates trauma for Borlú. He later notes, “It was, not surprisingly that day perhaps, hard to observe borders, to see and unsee only what I should, on my way home.” (2009: 44). This section explores how, central to upholding the border, is the coding of differences which construct Beszel and UI Qoma as ‘places’. For Borlú to be able to see correctly relies on him being able to identify the signifiers which constitute the self (‘Beszel’) and the simultaneous unseeing of that which constitutes the other (‘UI Qoma’).

Writing about TCATC from the perspective of international law, Douglas Guilfoyle notes, ‘The novel presents a vision of jurisdiction (or sovereignty) which is detached from territory (as an exclusionary construct) but which remains embedded in place (as something constructed by social practice). In the novel, two different streets, two different places as experienced by citizens, may occupy the same space’ (2016: 195). References to what make Beszel and UI Qoma ‘places’, enabling citizens to differentiate the cities, permeate the novel. Peter Cowley and Barbara Hanna (2014) provide a breakdown of the cultural signifiers which differentiate the cities ranging from currency, international investors, language, political regime, to the everyday, and less obviously politicised, including beverage of choice, fashion, stereotypical culinary ingredient and standards of time-keeping. Throughout the novel we observe Borlú commenting on these differences.

UI Qoma is regarded as the more affluent and ‘up and coming’ city reflected in its foreign investors and exuberant dress, whereas poorer Beszel is rather more drab and depressing. In one scene Borlú notes, ‘Most of those around us were in Beszel so we saw them. Poverty reshaped the already staid, drab cuts and colours that characterise Beszel clothes – what has been called the city’s fashionless fashion’. (2009: 21). Later, when Borlú visits UI Qoma, he notes, ‘It was strange for me not to unsee these people in formal UI Qoma dress – men in collarless shirts and dark lapelless jackets, the few women in spiral semiwraps in colours that would be contraband in Beszel’. (72) The aesthetic cues of which places citizens see and unsee are reflected in other points of difference, including architecture. Buildings in Beszel are taller than those in UI Qoma, ‘familiarily deco-angled’ (21) and painted in ‘Beszel blue’ (65), a colour which is illegal in UI Qoma. When Borlú visits UI Qoma, he reflects on investment driven building boom which, in his view, amounts to ‘architectural vandalism’ and notices the ‘traditional baroque curlicues’ which adorn heritage sites’ (162).

Borlú’s feelings of strangeness in UI Qoma are brought into sharp focus through an earlier scene in the novel, where the detective and an accompanying police officer Lizybet Corwi, visit Beszel’s little UI Qomatown. Borlú notes, ‘With the particular colours and script of the shop fronts, the shape of its facades, visitors to Beszel who saw it would always think they were looking at UI Qoma [...] But with a more careful eye, experience, you note the sort of cramped kitsch to the buildings’ designs, a squat self-parody’ (65). When asked by Corwi what they are doing in UI Qomatown, Borlú

offers her 'cinnamon lentils, thick set tea' in response, which is to help him 'get into the spirit of UI Qoma' (66). However, his discombobulation at being in the real UI Qoma is strongly manifest in his dislike of spices common to UI Qoman cuisine, prompting a local to suggest 'You miss potatoes' (235). His discomfort in UI Qoma, of having to see, hear, and consume the other, and unsee his own lifeworld, underlines the extent to which signifiers of difference are constitutive of Borlú's character and inhabit his very tastes, gestures, and manners (93). The construction of place and its embodiment in the lives of citizens, is tied to the bordering practices of seeing and unseeing, to which the discussion turns next.

Seeing/Unseeing as bordering

Borlú frequently informs the reader about the ways bordering practices of seeing/unseeing are taught to citizens of the cities. He notes, 'As kids we would assiduously unsee UI Qoma, as our parents and teachers had relentlessly trained us' (86). The pedagogical efforts which instil seeing/unseeing are tied to the successful identification of signifiers of difference which construct Beszel and UI Qoma as places. From this perspective, practices of seeing/unseeing are an exploration of Balibar's contention that 'borders are no longer at the border' (1998: 217-18) but are an intimate part of everyday life (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy, 2018). The everyday nature of the border means it is deeply embedded in the psyche of citizens; Borlú describes this as the 'deep prediscursive instinct for our borders that Besz and UI Qomans have' (2009: 93). TCATC reflects key insights from Critical Border Studies (CBS), which have shifted our understanding of borders away from naturalised physical frontiers of nation-states to political practices which constitute social order through a demarcation of inside/outside (Walker, 1993; Newman, 2003; Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012). This conceptualisation replaces more orthodox notions of the border as that which demarcates states, understood as containers for a priori nations and cultures, from each other. Instead, bordering produces state identities, gives rise to practices of security and government, and enables and constrains political possibilities. Van Houtum, Kramsch and Zierhofer note, 'a border is not so much an object or a material artefact as a belief, an imagination that creates and shapes a world, a social reality' (2005: 3).

In his visit to UI Qoma and in the course of the investigation, Borlú tells the reader, 'I saw groups of UI Qomans unsee me because of my clothes and the way I held myself, double-take and see my visitor's mark, and see me.' (172). He describes his own struggle to unsee his hometown, 'I held my breath, I was unseeing Beszel. I had forgotten what this was like; I had tried and failed to imagine it. I was seeing UI Qoma' (162). As bordering practices, seeing/unseeing inculcate ideas of place and belonging based on discussed signifiers of difference, into the minds of citizens. Not being able to imagine life in the other city captures the security logics of bordering practices. The security of the cities relies on the expulsion of difference embodied in the 'other' city, to the extent that houses which sit next to each other, but are in the respective cities, must be unseen. The rights of citizens rely on their ability to uphold

the fiction of living in a mono-cultural city, rather than one utterly enmeshed in difference and, where, you may walk past someone who is geographically proximate but not of your 'place'.

The codification of difference and seeing/unseeing are political practices which b/order space and produce political order (van Houtum, Kramsch and Zierhofer). These are everyday practices which institutionalise, and enforce, standards of who belongs and who does not, and of who 'we' are, through the exclusion of who we are not (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, and Cassidy, 2017). They construct deeply held, embodied, and materially inscribed ideas of 'place', policed through the exclusion of anything that does not belong, through seeing/unseeing. They offer a lens through which the racial borders of Prevent can be read by focusing on the construction of difference and who/what is (in)visibilised as a security threat. However, 'race' itself is not one of the markers of difference in TCATC, though racism features as something that happened in the past. In order to use the codification of difference and seeing/unseeing to recover the racial borders of Prevent, these techniques must be understood in the context of the politics of whiteness.

Visibilising whiteness, CRT, and white ignorance.

Studies of racisms in Britain imbricating differently racialised and gendered others are extensive (for further discussion see: Sivanandan, 1976; Hall *et al* 1978; Carby, 1982; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 2003). But the same cannot be said for research which looks at the intersection of Britain as a post-imperial formation and white supremacy, scholarship which is considerably more limited (Tyler, 2012; Schwarz, 2011; Atkinson, 2017; Wemyss, 2009). The relatively recent arrival of CRT from the US to the UK, which takes white supremacy and whiteness as central objects of analysis, speaks to this lack (Hylton, 2012). The antecedents of CRT lie in the earlier work of Critical Legal Studies (CLS) scholars in the US, where, for example, Bell and Crenshaw undertaken with the aim of challenging racist political orders (Crenshaw, Gotanda, Peller, and Thomas, 1996). UK-based CRT scholars have unwittingly highlighted the historic paucity of thinking around white supremacy in the British context, hastening their own engagements with a body scholarship firmly established in the US and its particular racial history (Gilborn, 2006). However, for Warmington, CRT represents a continuation of 'Black intellectual production' in the UK (2012: 5).

Beginning from the premise that racism is a 'permanent feature of modern social formations', CRT interrogates and rejects liberal models of race-equality and discourses of colour-blind and post-racial societies (Warmington, 2019: 4). These are considered to be insidious fictions crucial to the maintenance of white supremacy through the marginalisation of concerns around the persistence of structured racism (ibid). CRT centres the analysis of white supremacy conceived of as 'a political system, a particular power structure of formal and informal rule, privilege, socioeconomic advantages' (Taylor cited in Warmington, 2019: 6); moreover, white supremacy is regarded as 'systemic and global' (ibid). From this perspective, whiteness emerges as a racial category through which populations racialised as 'white'

– not simply ‘white’ people - benefit from this designation through what Harris describes as ‘racial caste’ (1993). Applebaum reminds us ‘whiteness is not merely about skin color alone but involves culturally, socially, politically and institutionally produced and reproduced system of institutional processes and individual practices’ (2010: 9). Thus, whiteness is not a matter of ‘bad’ racists and ‘well intentioned’ whites; intentionality is complicated through Applebaum’s contention that everyone racialised as white is complicit in the reproduction of white supremacy.

The benefits of whiteness, or ‘white privilege’ have been explored in a wider literature, through the context of property relations (Harris, 1993), constructions of the ‘white’ working class (Roediger, 1991; Shilliam, 2017), as well scholarship in Education Studies cited above. What unites this literature is idea white supremacist structures function through the invisibility of whiteness as a racial identity. The naming of whiteness is politically integral to CRT, because, as Dyer notes, ‘As long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as the human norm.’ (2005: 10). This article is particularly interested in notions of white ignorance, a term coined by Charles W. Mills, to visibilise the historically contingent ways in which structured ‘non-knowing’ conceals and perpetuates white supremacy (2007: 20). White ignorance is produced in a context where ‘one has an agreement to misinterpret the world [...] but with the assurance that this set of mistaken perceptions will be validated by white epistemic authority’ (Mills, 2007: 35). His epistemology of ignorance shows ‘non-knowing’ is an active practice serving to sustain white domination and not the product of a lack of education. In the British context, white ignorance is tied to the broader project of imperial amnesia.

Imperial amnesia and imperial nostalgia are concepts which have been deployed to explain the victory of the Leave campaign in the referendum on EU membership in 2016 (El-Enany, 2018; Virdee and McGeever, 2018). Koram and Nişancıoğlu (2017) write about ‘the widespread surprise about the descendants of imperial subjects arriving onto the British mainland’ serving to disrupt the formerly white idyll of Britain. A British exit from the EU was cast as an ‘opportunity’ to close the borders – or ‘take back control’ - and revive imperial Britain (El-Enany, 2018). The Leave campaign rhetoric was emblematic of a white ignorance around the British Empire, or what Wemyss calls the ‘Invisible Empire’. Wemyss shows how invisibility functions to ‘assert(s) particular narratives of Britain’s past whilst suppressing alternative histories, especially about the British Empire and related histories of white violence’ (2009: 3). White ignorance which constitutes the Invisible Empire entails not just the forgetting of atrocities, but the absence of a narrative about why populations from South Asia or the Caribbean, among others, migrated and settled in the British metropole. Furthermore, white ignorance ‘denies postcolonial people who live in the UK their place in the history of Englishness and Britishness’ as well ‘their place in contemporary formations of the nation’ (2012:12). Populations designated as ‘Muslim’ or ‘Bangladeshi’, for example, are cast as raced outsiders, interlopers in a landscape of a whitened Britain.

Understanding the practices of codifying difference and seeing/unseeing in the context of white ignorance and CRT, provides a racial lens to assess how the institutionalisation and policing of standards of belonging through Prevent operates. Firstly, the codification of difference in the construction of place are to be understood as racialised practices. Rendering Muslim populations as outsiders to white Britain through Prevent, relies on the racial codification of difference. Secondly, the bordering practices of seeing/unseeing work to embed and then obscure the construction of racial hierarchies of belonging. Seeing/unseeing operate to conceal the racial logics of Prevent by erasing how constructions of Muslim as threatening are tied to defences of a white Britain. The visibilisation of Prevent's racialised borders, which seek to determine who is included and excluded from white Britain, who is threatening and who is not, can then be understood as 'a sociology of (white) ignorance' (Mills, 2007: 23). The article brings to bear an understanding of how whiteness produces structured ignorance regarding the constitution of security threats.

Visibilising Prevent's racialised borders: coding Muslim difference, safeguarding, and unseeing Thomas Mair.

This final section visibilises the racial borders of Prevent through a study of how difference is coded and place constructed. The analysis explores the racialised coding of radicalisation and extremism as symptoms of Muslim difference, which threaten an unspoken but normalised white British identity. This section moves on to show how racialised borders are unseen through safeguarding, which provides a bureaucratic means for empowering gut instinct decision-making around who is a radical. These decisions are based on racialised knowledge about who is a security threat, which is hinted at, but not made explicit in training. Finally, the unseeing of Prevent's racial borders and their role in sustaining white violence is explored through of a case of right-wing extremist violence. When Thomas Mair assassinated Labour MP Jo Cox, he was cast as a lone wolf with mental health problems. This section will show right-wing extremism is unseen as structured racial violence through Prevent, because it functions as part of a white 'background to social action' (Ahmed: 2007). Simply put, right-wing extremism is part of a broader normalised continuum of racial violence in Britain. Mair's views on immigration and refugees which drove his violence towards Cox, whom he regarded as a 'traitor', were continuous with the defence of white Britain normalised through Prevent. They were also embodied in the Vote Leave campaign on the Brexit referendum in which context the assassination took place.

Coding Muslim difference as radical and extreme

The first iteration of the Prevent strategy (2006) makes no mention of right-wing extremism. This occurs later in 2009 with an acknowledgement that more must be done to tackle 'domestic forms of violent extremism' (HM Government, 2009: 12). This language illustrates the British citizens who carried out the London bombings in 2005, were not considered to be adequately British. The unrelenting focus of early Prevent work and its conceptualisation of radical and extreme were exclusively concerned with Muslim populations and the threat they posed to white Britain (Kundnani, 2009). Where Borlú and the citizens of Ul Qoma and Beszel are taught to unsee the difference embodied in the Other city, Prevent has hypervisibilised racialised Muslim populations,

who pose a pre-eminent security threat to white Britain. Muslim difference should be understood not as primarily religious but rooted in a British history of racialisation and colonialism (Pasha, 2017). While there is an understanding 'notions of race were mobilised to arrange humans according to phenotypical differences' in order to legitimise European colonialism (Sian, 2017: 3), how this intersects with religious difference is not sufficiently understood. Claire Alexander explains "the spectre of 'race' as key signifier of religio-cultural difference [...] is impossible, and indeed disingenuous, to separate either Islam from Muslims themselves, or 'Muslims' from the black and brown bodies who form the largest proportion of Muslim in Britain, and globally." (2017: 15).

The construction of racialised Muslim difference as threatening to, and outside of, white Britain is produced through Prevent's regulation of 'brown bodies' (Patel, 2017). Muslim bodies are racialised through a mixture of 'religious, cultural, and phenotypical identification' which converge to produce an idea of 'Muslimness' (Sian, 2017: 4). This understanding of Muslim difference combines biological attributes (skin colour) with religious and cultural practices including clothing (hijab, niqab, skull caps, kurtas), eating (halal meat, inhibitions on alcohol and pork) and a strong imaginary about the radical otherness of 'Muslim' practices which are not British (Ali and Whitham, 2018). This imaginary has included, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage (FM), veiling, a supposed propensity for electoral fraud, the imposition of sharia law, and child sexual exploitation (Alexander, 2017). Signifiers of radicalisation and extremism are synonymous with the coding of Muslim difference and the corresponding unspoken reproduction of Britain as a white nation.

White Britain is constructed through what Claire Crawford (2017) has called 'white British' norms, embodied in the introduction of Fundamental British Values (FBV). FBV are defined in opposition to extremist values exemplified by radical Islamic groups like al-Qaeda, and which, according to the British government, are held by many Muslims and Muslim organisations in Britain (HM Government, 2011: 1). As Crawford argues, 'the context of FBVs are racially coded and arguably refer to native (white British) cultural norms and mores only' and she critical that any of these values is especially British in light of the 'colonialism, enslavement, and racism' Britain is founded on (2017: 199). In the government's view, to be opposed to FBV, is to be outside the norms of white Britain and an extremist:

[...] vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. (HM Government, 2013: 1).

FGM and FM are regarded as symptoms of extremism precisely because they are located within an imaginary of Muslim difference and outside the norms of white Britain (Jones, 2019). Moreover, the construction of racialised Muslim difference through Prevent has led to the collective responsabilisation of all Muslims for terrorism and designated the 'Muslim community' as a distinctive spatial, religious, and cultural configuration, in challenging this (Qurashi, 2018). Prevent cites 'Muslim communities' as the principal sites of radicalisation where Muslims are 'aware' of what is going on (HM Government, 2006: 2). This was the premise of Preventing Extremism Together

(2005), a Britain-wide consultation with prominent Muslim figures following the London bombings in 2005. The need to engage with Muslims was driven by the idea that secret knowledge of terrorism and radicalism is held exclusively by Muslims.

Structures and practices of surveillance are not only embedded within Muslim spaces such as mosques or youth organisations. The Prevent Duty has made radicalisation prevention a statutory obligation across the public sector; Muslims encounter Prevent in schools (Walker, 2019), universities (Scott-Baumann, 2017), the NHS (Heath-Kelly and Strausz, 2018), prisons and through social services. Younis and Jadhav (2019) note that while the Prevent Duty brings everyone who encounters public sector institutions under the purview of counter-radicalisation surveillance through the collection of big data, the delivery and implementation of Prevent is still racially marked. They showed Muslim staff felt 'silenced' from voicing questions in Prevent training, for fear they would be labelled 'terrorist sympathisers' as they were already viewed 'through a lens of suspicion' due to their racial positioning (Younis and Jadhav, 2019: 412). Similarly, Walker shows how Muslim school children in East London feel silenced from speaking about politically sensitive topics in case of Prevent referrals.

Prevent training and safeguarding

'Prevent is safeguarding' is a maxim repeated by Prevent practitioners to counter accusations of racism (Cornish, 2016). The Prevent Duty has translated radicalisation prevention into a matter of safeguarding vulnerable individuals thereby erasing the racialised nature of this work. The Care Act (2014) introduced safeguarding as 'protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.' (NHS, 2014: 1). Prevent, implemented as safeguarding aims to move the vulnerable away from radicalisation and terrorism (Heath-Kelly and Strausz, 2018). It is through practices of safeguarding that Prevent is unseen as racially marked while tacitly empowering the gut instincts of practitioners to make decisions which rely on racialised knowledge.

Safeguarding enables the unseeing of racism embedded in ideas of radicalisation and extremism, underneath bureaucratic language and practice. Heath-Kelly and Strausz found Prevent safeguarding is deeply politicised as it facilitates information sharing between the healthcare practitioners and counter-terrorism officers. This happens by responsabilising practitioners to make decisions about whether someone is a radical. GP Siema Iqbal (2016) writes, 'I clearly understand the definition of safeguarding when it comes to child neglect, physical abuse and sexual abuse. In relation to extremism, however, there appears to be no shared consensus or definition as to what children should be safeguarded from'. But, the lack of a shared definition regarding radicalisation and extremism enables rather than inhibits the ability of white practitioners in particular, to make referrals based on their gut instincts about who is threatening to Britain.

Prevent training sessions, known as WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness about Prevent), become spaces of white ignorance, in the same way Borlú describes unseeing as a deliberative practice. There are six case study videos, two are concerned with the far-right and three with al-Qaeda. The training includes

'Introduction', 'Susceptibilities' (sic), 'The risk of radicalisation,' 'Behaviours,' 'What to do,' and 'Action Plan' (Heath-Kelly and Strausz, 2018). There is a script to deliver the training. Practitioners are encouraged not to engage with the content of ideologies, which would require them to have political and theological knowledge, but the emotional states of their patients (Heath-Kelly and Strausz, 2018: 41). The feelings of practitioners, about who is radical are responsibilised to make judgements about security threats. In their survey of 329 practitioners, Heath-Kelly and Strausz found the majority of respondents were 'strongly confident' that WRAP training had explained the signs of radicalisation. Respondents expressed 'strong comfort' in their experience of undergoing training, while 58% were confident or extremely confident in their ability to make a referral after the training. However, there was a greater degree of ambiguity over whether Prevent referrals constitute safeguarding, or whether it should be a part of health-care. The responses to whether Prevent is a form of surveillance garnered a split decision.

Despite the wider lack of certainty over whether radicalisation prevention is safeguarding and therefore in the purview of NHS work, practitioners were still confident to make referrals. When asked if practitioners would make a safeguarding referral if patients possessed 'radical Islamist' or anarchist philosophy, or, if patients had watched beheading videos, the answer was predominantly, 'yes'. Heath-Kelly and Strausz conclude, radicalisation is understood through a wider cultural framework than the narrow framing evident in training videos. Fernandez, Walker and Younis (2018) argue, "Gut feelings and instincts about individuals are produced through racialised understandings of risk and vulnerability [...] these risks take the form of Muslim-looking individuals." This is what Borlú describes in TCATC as the 'deep prediscursive instinct' for the border. In other words, racialised ideas of who is threatening are already circulating, they need only to be hinted at through references to beheading videos which invoke ideas of Muslim savagery (James, 2016), for instance, prompting a practitioner to make a referral and thus producing the racial border. Tacit racialised knowledge empowers white practitioners to make referrals while at the same time silencing Muslim practitioners from speaking out (Younis and Jadhav 2019).

Seeing Thomas Mair

The racial borders of Prevent do not simply function to hyper-visibility Muslim populations, but, they also serve to invisibilise the violence of right-wing extremists as structured white violence. In order to 'see' this violence, the final section explores the case of white supremacist Mair, who assassinated Cox, in 2016. The case shows how violence perpetrated by white supremacists is individualised through 'lone wolf' and mental health narratives. White supremacist violence, to date, has not been read as a collective failure of white communities to challenge extremism nor does it lead to community-based counter-terrorism responses through Prevent. Evidence of extremist views that might be expected to lead to a Prevent referral embodied by Mair, such as anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment, are in fact part of mainstream British politics or business as usual. The case underlines why, despite claims to the contrary, Prevent cannot adequately challenge all forms of extremism because it represents continuation of white racial violence.

In 2016, a week before the Brexit referendum, Mair, murdered the progressive Cox outside her constituency office in West Yorkshire. The *Guardian* reported:

They saw Mair swing the knife again and again as he stabbed Cox 15 times in her heart, lungs and abdomen. One blow pierced her chest after passing through her right arm. He did so, according to the eyewitness, while saying: **“Britain first, keep Britain independent, Britain will always come first.” Finally, he yelled: “This is for Britain.”** (Cobain, Parveen, and Taylor, 2016).

Mair was charged with murder, a common law offence, but prosecuted as a terrorist because his motives were political. Judge Justice Wilkie noted, “There is no doubt that this murder was done for the purpose of advancing a political, racial and ideological cause namely that of violent white supremacism and exclusive nationalism most associated with Nazism and its modern forms.” (Judiciary of England and Wales, 2016). By locating Mair’s actions in the context of Nazism as the main source of white supremacism, Wilkie unwittingly distances the actions of this assassin from the here-and-now of British politics. An analysis of media reporting further reveals that there was a clear attempt to separate the assassination from the racist context of Britain’s EU referendum, by casting Mair as a mentally ill loner with Nazi sympathies. Most strikingly for the analysis is that Mair was regarded as a ‘lone wolf’, who acted outside the structures of civilised British society (Cobain, Parveen, and Taylor, 2016; Thornton and Sommerlad, 2016).

Lalami notes those labelled ‘terrorist’ in are black and brown bodies – or ‘criminals in waiting’ - and yet, white male shooters remain the figure of the ‘Lone Wolf’ (2017). This ‘whiteness of the white wolf’ removes violent white men from the contexts in which they are produced. Koehler (2018) argues the consequence of this evacuation is the unseeing of, “armed white men are the largest terrorist threat in America at the moment— having killed more Americans in domestic terrorism incidents since 9/11 than Muslim extremists.” She also claims the media gives lone wolves the ‘benefit of the doubt’ or reasons for why they might ‘snap’ including mental health problems. ITV News report, ‘Far-right obsessed loner Mair visited the Birstall Wellbeing Centre in his home town on the evening of June 15 to ask for advice on how to control his mental health.’ (Kelly, 2016) He was also described as a ‘loner and a Nazi sympathiser’ (Greenwood and Sinmaz, 2016). Placing Mair in the continuum of historic German fascism rather than contemporary racism in Britain, has dangerous consequences (Burgis, 2016).

The understanding that Mair was exceptional to the usual order of business is important in erasing the complicity of mainstream commentators producing anti-immigrant and anti-refugee sentiment central to his actions. Jones describes these narratives about Mair, as examples of ‘everyday white supremacism’ which should not be separated from the ‘virulent, overt and mostly un-accepted white supremacism (and related misogyny)’ (2019: 3). The views Mair expressed were fully embodied in the vote Leave campaign whose slogans included ‘Taking Back Control’ and ‘Vote Leave; Take Control’. Satnam Virdee and Brendan McGeever’s (2016) suggest these slogans were driven by imperial nostalgia and the reclaiming of a white Britishness under threat from the globalisation. Britain would rejuvenate its economic fortunes through a return to trading with Commonwealth countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and India). Britain would close the door on an EU which had allowed immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees to ‘flood in’ and ‘takeover’.

It is precisely this loss of economic, political, and racial privilege, being resuscitated by the Brexiteer howl to ‘Put Britain First’. The politics of Cox, as a vociferous supporter of refugee rights, of the diversity of her constituency and her

support for the EU marked her out as a traitor to white Britain (Jones, 2019). From this perspective, Prevent racialised borders which mark out Muslim populations as security threats to white Britain, operate as everyday white supremacism. Prevent functions to normalise racial violence against Muslim populations through everyday bordering embodied in the Prevent Duty, and then erases knowledge of these practices as racial. The violence committed by Mair is a continuation of Prevent's work of producing the racial borders of white Britain which need defending. The notion that Prevent deals with all forms of extremism, and that strategic importance is placed on threats which are most pressing, is a consummate example of white ignorance.

Conclusion

Following the conclusion of the EU referendum, Nigel Farage declared, 'Today, honesty, decency and belief in nation, I think now is going to win. And we will have done it without having to fight, without a single bullet being fired' (Saul, 2016). Farage's words are emblematic of how logics of seeing/unseeing operate to hyper-visibility and to unsee, differently racialised forms of political violence. To argue Brexit was accomplished without violence is to unsee the murder of Cox by a white supremacist. Even as Mair proclaimed his actions were for Britain, 'to put Britain first' - a formulation which only makes sense in a broader system of signification where minorities, refugees and asylum seekers, aided and abetted by a feckless EU are 'taking over' Britain - the assassination was ultimately unable to visibility the very mainstream violence of the borders of white Britain. It is precisely this structured unseeing of white racial violence premised on white ignorance that enables Prevent's postulation of racial borders and their reproduction in the everyday.

To summarise, the use of TCATC and themes of codification of difference and seeing/unseeing has allowed for the recovery of Prevent's racial borders, which were otherwise concealed through structures of white ignorance. The analysis reveals three central insights. The first is Prevent's normalisation of white Britain and the racialisation of radicalisation and extremism which become code words for expressions of Muslimness. The second is how Prevent erases the racism which is bound up in identifying potential radicals through the language and practice of safeguarding and WRAP training. Finally, Prevent actively contributes to the production of racial violence perpetrated in defence of white Britain. These insights show that far from responding to all extremist threat, Prevent is part of a racial continuum of white violence and, thus, an inadequate policy response to the very real rise of transnational white supremacist violence. It is precisely the everyday ways in which white supremacism is generated that Prevent produces that are deeply troubling in this present juncture. This at a time when white supremacists acting to 'take back control' of their borders are organised, internationalised, and holding public office. Moreover, in light of the EU referendum and the forging of transatlantic alliances between British and US neo-Nazis, fascists, and white supremacists, and burgeoning white violence against racialised populations, Prevent is not fit for purpose in challenging all extremism threats.

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